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Having a ball
See coverage of this year's Dorest Snowball on page 2.

Smiles for miles
Read about VDO's recent trip to Honduras on page 3.

Slip, slide, score
See photos of a broomball tournament in Minden on page 7.

Hawks on Three! The Haliburton Highlands Secondary School junior girls volleyball team grin does their team cheer before winning the Kawartha Championship on home ground on Thursday, Feb. 15. The team went on to win the COSSA Championship on Thursday, Feb. 22. /TIM YANO Special to *County Life*

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For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

"If you're not in Dorset, you're not anywhere!"

THOMAS SMITH
County Life Staff

"If you're not in Dorset, you're not anywhere!" shouts the Town Crier, opening this year's Dorset Snowball WInter Carnival. The crowd erupted in roarous applause after Liz Danielsen cut the ribbon to kick this year's Snowball off.

Crowds of family and carnival goers lined the road to watch the parade. Sirens blared, lights flashed, and kids roared in excitement over the parade of vehicles. Floats with performing musicians and local businesses handing out sweets were especially big hits with the young crowd.

"This is a nice day for February," said Steve Morrin, 71. Morrin has been attending the Dorset Snowball for 16 years. He was eager to tell everyone about the skulls, feathers, and bones that adorned his table. Morrin has collected a sizeable collection over the years and desires to spread the love of nature to future generations.

Although the crowd last year was unbelievable, the crowd this year was quite impressive, said Morrin.

The smell of golden delicious fries and sizzling bacon drew a sizeable crowd towards the vendors. The Dorset Lions Club, Into the Blue Bakery, and Johnny's Frozen Treats were all serving a mouth-watering assortment of food. The Emes Family was offering samples of maple taffy for free, fresh and made onsite.

"It's been a great turnout this year," said Sandra Rogers. "The crowd is great, the weather's been a blessing and we've got our hills and our snow so we're happy."

The Dorset Snowball Winter Carnival had a variety of events for the day including the hilarious Great Canadian Lumber Jack Show, Junkyard Symphony performers, face painting, winter games for children, skating, and cardboard toboggan races. Prizes for the fastest and best decorated toboggans were given out, as well as best costume of a rider.

Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock MPP Laurie Scott holds one end of the ribbon while Algonquin Highlands Mayor Liz Danielson cuts it to officially open the Dorset Winter Snowball on Saturday, Feb. 17. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Cassidy and Brianna Emes made maple toffee for festival goers at the Dorset Snowball this weekend.

A sizeable crowd gathered to watch the hilarious Lumber Jack show at the Dorset Snowball.

Pizza on Earth created a pizza making snowman that had to be carried by tractor in the parade.

VDO heads off to Honduras

VIVIAN COLLINGS
County Life Editor

Dentists, hygienists, and assistants from the Haliburton County Volunteer Dental Outreach (VDO) have flown to Honduras this month to share the gift of healthy smiles with 700 children.

Since Bill Kerr's first trip in 2009, the dentist from Dentistry in the Highlands was inspired to start VDO.

"On the plane ride back, I turned to one of the hygienists and said, 'There's an awful lot of poverty in Haliburton County, and wouldn't it be great if we could open up a free clinic in Haliburton and look after some of the people that can't afford to look after themselves,'" he said.

The dream became reality, and Kerr has been flying back to Honduras every year minus the past three due to COVID-19 health measures.

It's now a family affair. All three of his kids, now with their own careers in the dentistry, have participated in the trip.

"This trip is what got me interested in dentistry in the first place. It was my first exposure to the dentist's perspective. It's cool to have a specific skill where you can help people and see a difference," said Loretta Kerr, dentist with Dentistry in the Highlands and Bill's daughter. "We go in and see that these people have no access to dental care. We can also see the value of patient education."

Bill, Loretta, Lisa, and J.J. Kerr stand together on one of VDO's past Honduras trips. This year, Loretta, Bill, and 17 others from their team are going back to provide free dental care for local children. /Photo submitted

Back in 2008, Bill became friends with someone living half of the year in Haliburton and half of the year in Honduras.

He knew he wanted to share his skills in an area that didn't have them, so it was the perfect place to start.

"Basically the hygienists would see the kids at school, clean their teeth, and if any of them needed more work done they'd bring them to the clinic I was working in, and I'd do as much dentistry as I could," he said.

In 2010, Bill's son J.J. went as his assistant while in high school.

Loretta also went when she was in Grade 11 in 2011.

"Our other son Steve came for a few times as well, and he's now a denturist," Bill said.

J.J. and Loretta were each able to go as student dentists in their fourth years of dental school through an outreach program with the University of Toronto.

"Lisa came for the first time in 2011 as well and also ran sterilization," Bill said.

Lisa, Bill's wife, passed away on Feb. 15, 2023, and he said this year's trip is dedicated to her memory.

"She would've loved to be there with us. She was such a huge part of putting it together," Bill said.

With a team of 19 this year, Bill and a few others will fly down on Wednesday, Feb. 21 with the rest of the team following on Saturday.

"The weird thing about going back now is that we'll be seeing kids we might have never met since it's been four years. There's going to be a lot to catch up on this year," Loretta said.

The team flies into San Pedro Sula, a city in the northern part of Honduras.

A bus then takes them to the smaller village of El Porvenir.

With a population of only 6,000, the town has three schools.

"We see probably all of the kids from the biggest school, and in the second week, we see kids from the smaller schools, and then we also see kids from an orphanage," Bill said.

"You know you're making a difference when you see kids year after year and their smiles are healthier," Loretta said. "We're excited to go back."

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REPRIEVE

Icicles, dripping, like glass tears, from the eaves,
fingers of Air, grazing my cheeks, fresh as spring breeze,
this brief reprieve from the freeze, before the fury of winter returns,
Sun glazing the skin of Snow, a crow pecking at its crust, as a droplet of icicle drops onto its wing,
melting into the gloss of its feathers, as I wonder whether it feels the warmth of late afternoon Sun,
sharing Sky with the Moon, that rises above the hills,
that rises above the hills, as I peer up at the smudge of white, tiny as a thumbprint, dangling up there, in February Sky,
my eyes tracing the scar an airplane leaves behind, carrying strangers, leaving or returning Home,
as I feel a tugging in my chest, like a blind bird squirming in its nest, before it discovers its wings can fly,
a familiar restlessness, stirring inside me, as I stand here in the Snow, shackled to my shadow,
'till the scar fades into the blue of Sky, and my eyes are grounded again,
glancing down at the crow, still pecking at the crust of Snow, beneath the eaves,
the icicles, dripping, like the notes of a silent symphony, that only my Heart can hear,
as I cup my face up towards the orb of Sun, grateful for this reprieve,
crows, squawking in the willows across the street, Sun, bathing their limbs and wilted tresses in a golden light,
my senses basking in this February thaw, before winter claws its way back,
the willows reminding me of why I stay, their roots spreading beneath the frozen earth, deep as the trees grow high,
their stillness, as the light paints the bark on their trunks, the colour of a tarnished wedding band, grounding me,
as my eyes keep fluttering back up towards Sky, watching the swelling Moon rise, as the Sun begins its slow descent,
silent as icicle droplets dripping onto Snow, the crow, no longer there, beneath the eaves,
flapping through Air, somewhere, maybe returning to join its con-freres in the willows,
their shadows, stretching across Snow, as I walk towards them,
like childhood friends, welcoming me Home.

By Sylvie Kalenda

Mellow yellow
An Evening Grosbeak stands out on a dull winter day.
/Submitted by Tammy Nash

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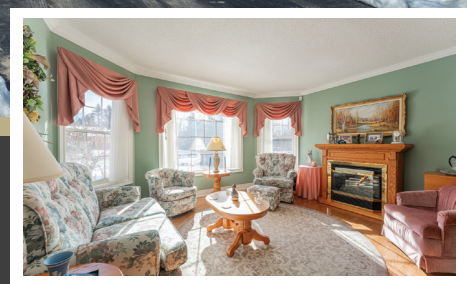

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Canoe FM hosted a successful Open House event this weekend showcasing their recording studio's capabilities. The room was packed with volunteers and visitors abound /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Canoe FM open house invites community to record

THOMAS SMITH
County Life Staff

"It's about giving people the opportunity who thought, 'well, I'd really like to get recording' and they just don't know where to go," says Laurie Sweig, volunteer for Canoe FM.

The Canoe FM Radio Station had an Open House this weekend to highlight their new recording space.

For those interested in using the radio station's recording space, there will be a pre-recording meeting to establish expectations for your project and set up the proper equipment. Services include recording, editing, mixing, and mastering. Afterwards, an .mp3, .wav, or Logic will be provided. There is a minimum donation required of $20 per hour.

Only original music recorded at the station will be available to play on the radio, as well as requested by the public.

All of the volunteers at Canoe FM are extremely passionate about music and have the training for their equipment to meet people's needs, says Roxanne Casey, Station Manager.

While they doubt Taylor Swift would make the trek to Haliburton, they are very open to her using the recording studio, says Casey and Sweig.

"Music is magic and it's great medicine. So the more that you're around it, I believe, the healthier you are," says Sweig, "it's hitting parts of your brain that otherwise don't get stimulated."

Kinder registration now open

Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) has opened registration for students starting Kindergarten in September 2024.

TLDSB offers both junior and senior Kindergarten programs, where our youngest students develop a strong foundation for learning in all areas.

At this stage, students grow through play-based learning and small group instruction with caring educators. Students will learn about language and math, engage in healthy physical activities and the arts, and develop socially and emotionally through interaction with their peers and educators who guide them.

Parents/guardians of children who are turning four in 2024 are encouraged to visit the Kindergarten Registration page on tldsb.ca to register their child(ren) and learn more about the programs. To find out which elementary school your child(ren) will attend based on the home address, use the School Locator. All contact information for our elementary schools can be found on the Board Directory.

September may seem like a far way away, but it's important for TLDSB to know how many students are enrolled so that staffing and spaces for the upcoming school year can be made. TLDSB asks all parents/guardians to register their child(ren) by March 31.

If you have further questions, contact your child(ren)'s local elementary school.

Submitted

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Send your letters to the editor to vivian@haliburtonpress.com. Letters must be signed and include a phone number.

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Reaching out and reaching in

KATE BUTLER
Special to *County Life*

IN A small community, we pride ourselves on knowing our neighbours.

We regularly joke about how long it takes us to do our shopping because of everyone we meet at the grocery store or how we can be assured of always having someone to sit with in the coffee shop, even if we arrive on our own.

However, even in a small close knit community, there can still be a great deal about others that we don't know, including who may be struggling in some way. In recent years, the discourse surrounding mental health has advanced remarkably and many of the topics which would have been considered taboo even a few decades ago are now openly discussed.

We're regularly reminded through everything from social media to popular music that "it's okay not to be okay" and that people should reach out to others when they're in difficult circumstances. Despite these vast strides that have been made, there are still many who find it difficult to reach out for a variety of reasons.

For some, there's a fear of being a burden, knowing that others around them have busy lives and perhaps struggles of their own. Sometimes people find it difficult to articulate how or why they're struggling -

even trying to put it into words may feel exhausting or may make them second guess themselves.

Some may come to the conclusion that there are other people who have it worse and thus, it's wrong of them to make a fuss. They might feel a need to present themselves to the world as strong and untroubled, because they know that other people are relying on them.

Some people may have had previous unpleasant experiences when trying to share with others. They might fear that someone who means well will claim to have solutions without having an understanding of the full scope of the situation. Perhaps on previous occasions, they found their feelings or experiences being discounted by those people they tried to share them with, which has made them reluctant to try again.

So, how can we help those around us? One way is to simply bring with us the knowledge that anyone we meet may be dealing with circumstances about which we know nothing and to approach people and situations with kindness and compassion.

We can apply this to all our encounters. Sometimes it can also help to gently reach in when others may be finding it difficult to reach out. Being truly present in our interactions with others can make a huge difference.

This means putting distractions off to one side and being an active listener. It may be taking the time to ask the right question that makes someone feel comfortable to open up or simply reminding someone that you're there for them.

Depending on circumstances, it may have nothing to do with words. It might be a thoughtful gesture, a welcome invitation or a safe space for someone to simply be and for someone to be with them.

Let's look out for and look after each other. We're stronger together.

Top 10 reasons to slather yourself in bear grease

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

WELL, IT'S that time of year again, when regular folks like you and me are thinking about applying bear grease to our bodies. This is something a lot of city folks don't understand, mostly because they are accustomed to city ways.

I know I don't need to tell anyone who is local. But, for those city folks, here are the top 10 reasons to slather yourself in bear grease.

1. Feels so darn good.
2. Makes you practically tackle proof.
3. Give you an edge in any in Greco-Roman wrestling tournament.
4. So the black flies will slide right off.
5. Because you always wanted to be known as "The Human Bobsled."
6. Helps when getting into those "snug" jeans.
7. Who doesn't want to be known as "The Bear Grease Guy?"
8. Because grease is still the word.
9. What else you going to do with all this bear grease?
10. More environmentally friendly than axle grease.

The 4+ Seasons

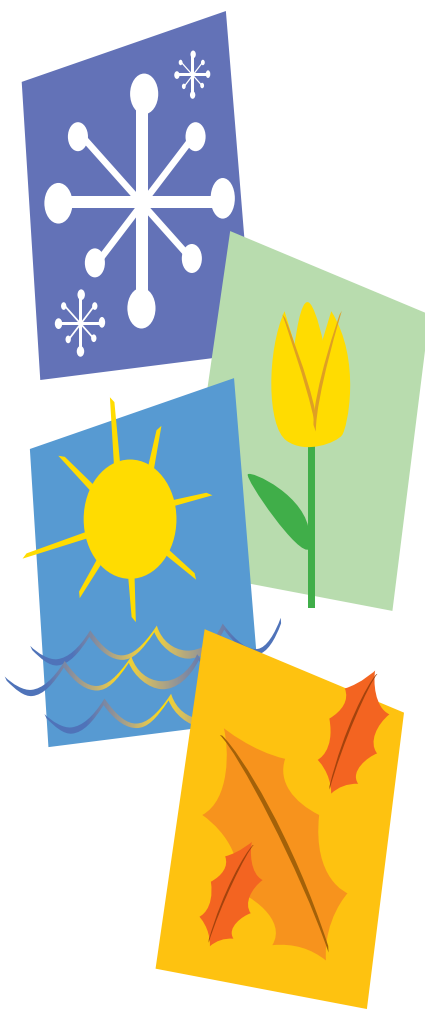
Do we have perhaps some extra reasons here to toast?
Maybe rhyming couplet is a handy way to boast
More than maple syrup, red canoes and handsome plaid
Our list of traditions is amazingly not bad
Though a year is commonly divided into four
Seasons bring to country folk their rituals galore
Myriads of cycles, charm and duty in our lives
Added to each twelve month-set, it's how good will survives

Snowmobiling season is a happy episode
Same with summer grow-time when the hay and lawns are mowed
But with warmth, mosquitoes (almost worse, black flies in spring)
Next our autumn colours which make tourist cameras sing
Ice fishing is optional since lakes need time to freeze
Jack Frost can be well-advanced, yet open waters tease
Same stress for the skiers who wait patiently for snow
Their fun in the flaky months requires cold below

Lupins with poetic banks of purple, pink and white
Only several weeks of show, then wither out of sight
Strawberries, our market fave, are gobbled by the crate
Canning time's a custom, future breakfasts on a plate
Farming, hunting, trapping rights, and turtle-hatching too
Migratory birding, August meteors to view
Artists and their products, open studios, free tours
Hockey team excitement loyal audience ensures

Do we have perhaps some extra reasons here to toast?
Maybe rhyming couplet is a handy way to boast

By Deborah J Reed



Slip, slide, score!

The third Annual Broomball Tournament held by Els and Matt at their Minden home was a huge success this past weekend. Over 44 people were in attendance. 6 teams faced off in the Double Elimination Bracket. Matches were close, competition was fierce and it was all left out on the Broomball Court. The Rockies took home the coveted Broomball Trophy. Captain, Blayne Saunders led Glenn Rammsdale, Gavin Hull, Gen Simone, the Gibbons brothers Nathan and Aaron to victory against the Nordiques. Thank you to all who came out to play, cheer and support an amazing event. See you next year! /Submitted by Matt Brown

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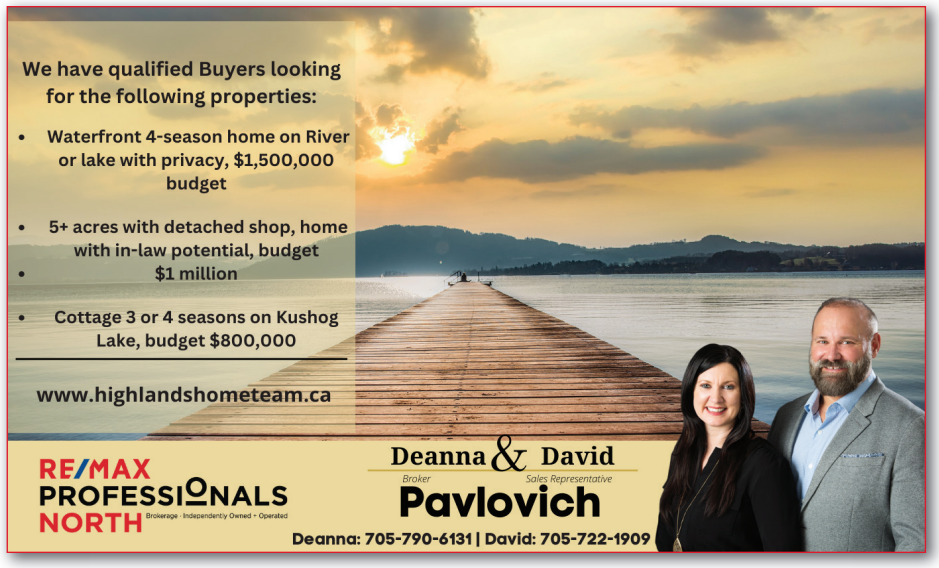
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Calling all designers and artists!

Logo contest for U-Links' 25th

This year the U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research is celebrating its 25th year of engaging post secondary students in research in Haliburton County.

We work with students and professors from Trent University, Fleming College and other institutions to solve local problems that you – residents of the County – make us aware of! We work in all sectors – cultural, social, business, environmental and economic – to ensure that Haliburton County remains a great place to live, work and recreate in.

Keep an eye on the local media for notification of several events that U-Links will be hosting throughout 2024 and be sure to join us at our annual Celebration of Research at The Haliburton School of Art and Design on Saturday, March 23.

As part of our celebrations, we are inviting local artists and designers to submit suggestions for a 25th anniversary logo that will be displayed at our events and on our correspondence through 2024. The Logo should clearly indicate U-Links 25th Anniversary but other than that designers are free to integrate into the logo, themes that address learning, education, students, local issues and Haliburton County. There is no restriction on the use of colour or design patterns. The only request is that it can be printed in black and white or in colour.

Additional information on U-Links can be found at ulinks.ca; the searchable research database on that site will also provide artists with topics that have been historically addressed by U-Links.

The winner will be announced, and the logo prominently displayed at our Celebration of Research. The winner will receive a prize and be given name recognition throughout the year. Please consider entering!

Please note that the winner will retain designer's rights to the logo but that the logo may only be displayed with the permission of U-Links. U-Links also reserves the right to forgo declaring a winner, in the event that no suitable logo is submitted.

Logo submissions should be sent via email to admin@ulinks.ca with LOGO DESIGN clearly indicated in the subject line. Please indicate how you would like to be contacted if you are the successful submission: email or phone. The deadline for submissions is midnight, March 15, 2024.

Submitted

We are the champions

The Haliburton Highlands Secondary School junior girls volleyball team grin with pride after winning the Kawartha Championship on home ground on Thursday, Feb. 15. The team went on to win the COSSA Championship on Thursday, Feb. 22. /TIM YANO Special to County Life

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Legion Events

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge every Monday, 1 p.m. Schofield Rm.
Tuesdays: League darts starting at 7 p.m. Haliburton Army Cadets practice 6:30 to 9 p.m. (Sept to June)
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo starts at 7 p.m. First Wed of each month - $1000 jackpot, rest will be a $500 jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, starting at 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend. Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Meat draw has five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are $2 per draw. Ed Pickard, MC.
Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards.
Saturdays: 50/50 Draw 4 p.m. draw – tickets are $1 each available in the Clubroom.

Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for more information call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129 ... everyone is welcome!

Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m. and Sat. 3 to 6 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Schedules are subject to change without notice. Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce Events

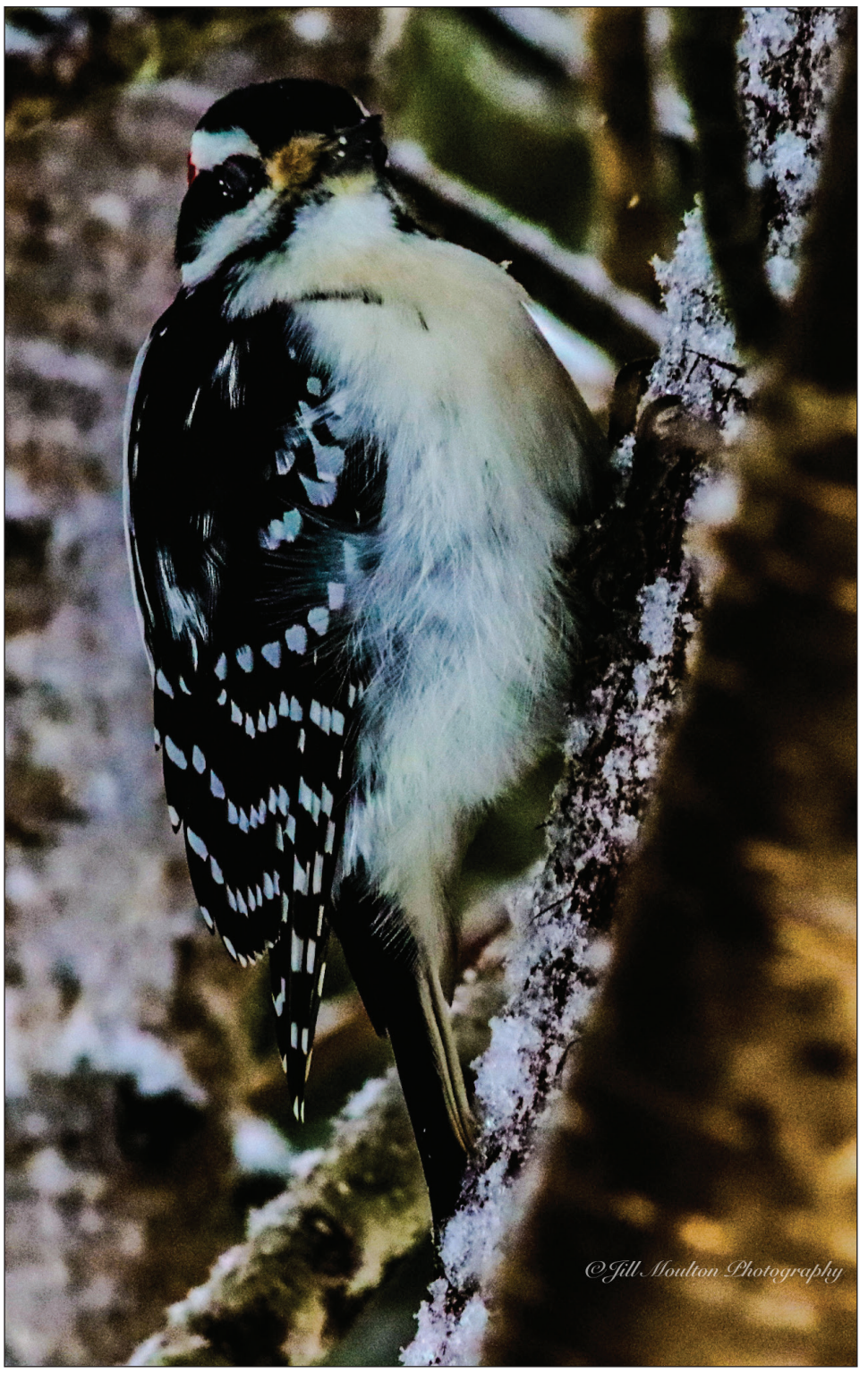
February 29th – OPEN 2-6pm
March 1st – OPEN 2-9pm Wings/Jam 5-8pm
March 2nd – OPEN 2-6pm – Meat Draw 3pm
March 3rd – CLOSED
March 4th – CLOSED
March 5th – CLOSED – Executive Meeting 7pm
March 6th – OPEN 2-6pm Darts 2pm

If you are planning an event our Ladies Auxiliary would be pleased to cater

Please call the branch at 705-448-2221 to arrange your event.

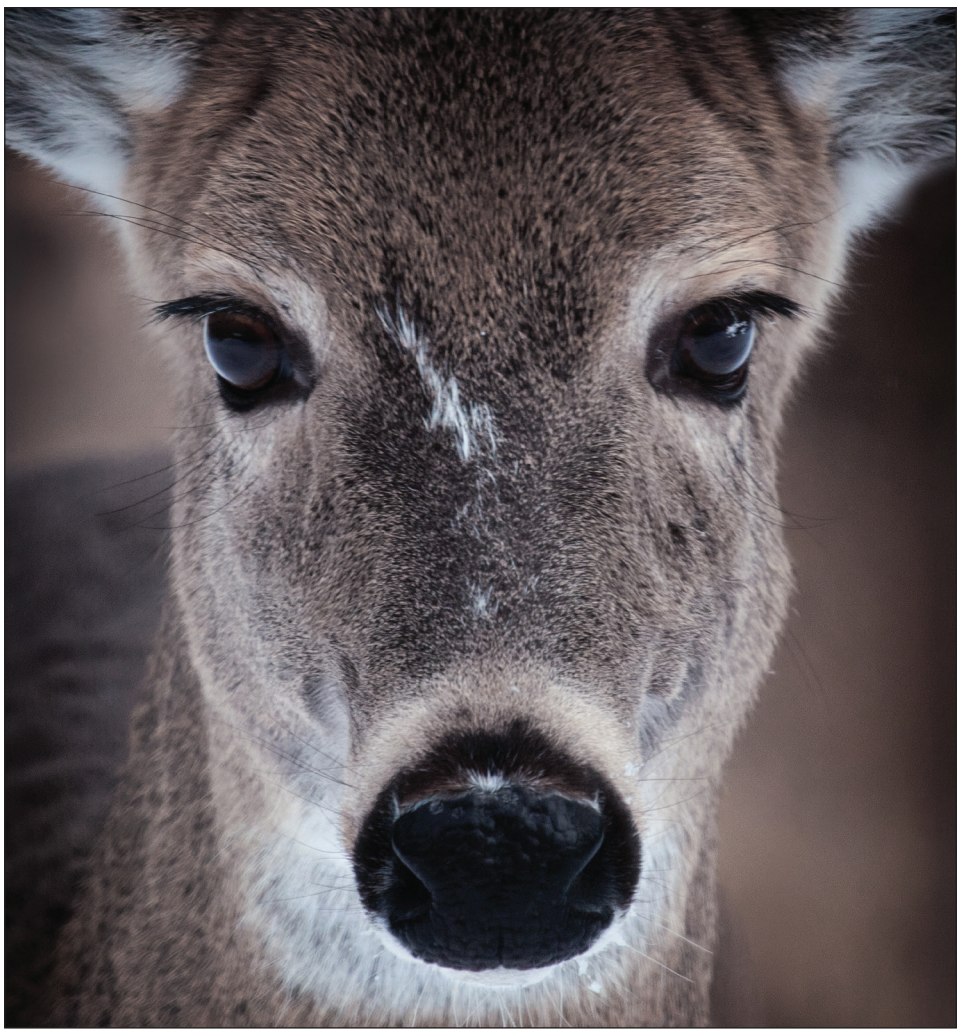
Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email vivian@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.



A Hairy Woodpecker blends in with the trees. /Submitted by Jill Moulton

A Pine Marten, affectionately named Dean, shows off his teeth. /Submitted by Tammy Nash



A curious mother doe keeps watch. /Submitted by Tammy Nash

Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Creative Collaborations
When: Tuesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church. 617 Mountain Street
Share your skills. Learn new skills. Bring your own project or work on the featured project. Beginners Welcome. Contact lynnhiggsthompson@haliburtonanglican.ca for details.

Seniors Chair Exercises
When: Thursdays, at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church, 617 Mountain St.
Safe and gentle exercises for seniors to help with balance, strength and flexibility. Free to join.

Cribbage and Euchre
When: Tuesdays at 2 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church, 617 Mountain St.
Join us Tuesdays for cribbage and Euchre at St. George's Anglican Church. With funding from the Government of Ontario. Please contact lynnhiggsthompson@haliburtonanglican.ca for more information.

Student Art Exhibition
When: Now until March 30
Where: Agnes Jamieson Gallery, 176 Bobcaygeon Rd. Minden
Archie Stouffer Elementary School and the Agnes Jamieson Gallery present to you a juried exhibition of artwork with the theme 'What does Minden mean to you? Viewing is available Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is by donation. Contact culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or 705-286-3763 for full details and updates.

World Day of Prayer Service
When: Mar. 1 at 2 p.m.
Where: Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St. Minden
Join us for our World Day of Prayer service at Highland Hills United Church. Everyone is welcome.

Plant Pruning Presentation
When: Tuesday March 5, 1 p.m.
Where: Minden Community Center, 55 Parkside St. Minden
Please join the Minden and District Horticultural Society for a presentation. Our guest speaker Tanya Smith will be reviewing 'Pruning'. This will be followed by the monthly society meeting. The associated Youth Garden Club will follow the meeting, running from 4 pm to 5 pm. The Youth Garden Club is for children in grade 2 or higher that want to explore their interest in all things that grow.

Lenten Lunch
When: March 6 at 12 noon
Where: St. Paul's Anglican Church, 19 Invergordon Ave. Minden
Please join us at St Paul's Anglican Church for a service at 12 noon followed by a soup lunch by donation.

Lenten Lunch
When: March 13 at 12 noon
Where: Our Lady of Fatima Church, 7 Bobcaygeon Rd. Minden
Please join us at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church for a service at 12 noon followed by a soup lunch by donation.

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540 COMING EVENTS

Lenten Lunches Wednesdays
Feb. 21 - St. Paul's Anglican Church,
Feb. 28 - Minden Bible Church at St. Paul's Anglican,
March 6 - St. Paul's Anglican,
March 13 - Our Lady of the Fatima Catholic Church,
March 20 - Highland Hills United Church. **Services at noon,** followed by Soup Lunch, by donation.

400 EMPLOYMENT

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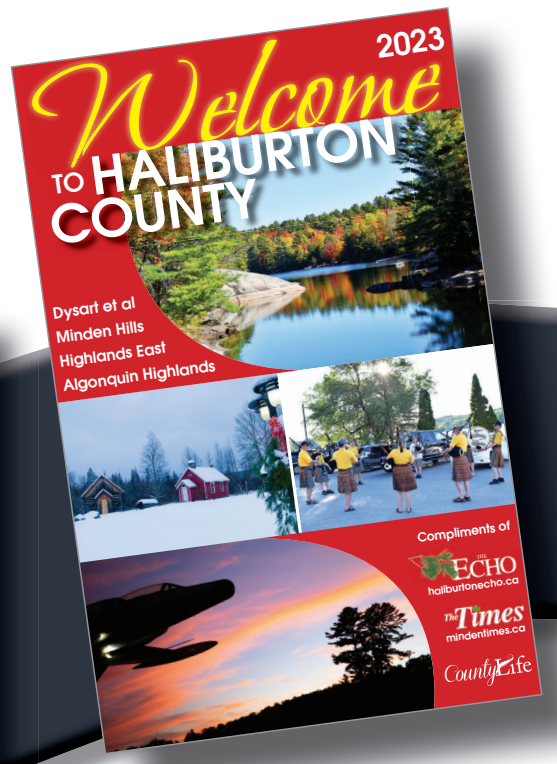

Designed to inform both old and new comers alike about our great County of Haliburton.

In this magazine readers will find important information about each of our four municipalities, our County, Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, our non-profit organizations, hospitals, schools, churches, landfills, and much more.

The centre two pages will include a map of Haliburton County which will clearly outline each municipality.

Distribution will be through County Life, Haliburton County Real Estate offices, local stores, and our self-serve boxes at high traffic locations throughout Haliburton County.

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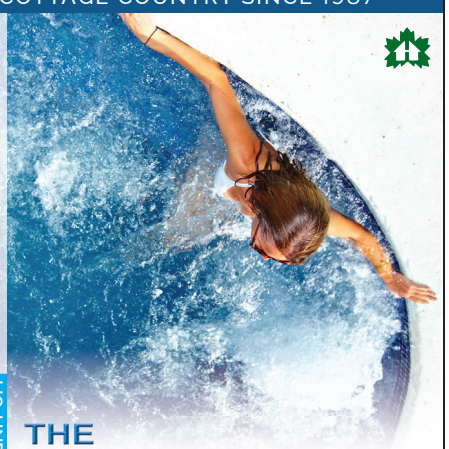

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1998 Vol. 116, No. 1 • 32 PAGES 90 cents (incl. GST)

Loss of JK puts students "at risk" of having problems

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

The number of Kindergarten students "at risk" of having literacy and language problems has jumped since schools in Haliburton and Victoria Counties stopped offering Junior Kindergarten classes 18 months ago.

That's the conclusion of senior administrators at the newly amalgamated school board for Haliburton County, Muskoka and Victoria County.

At two of the six schools administrators studied, their findings show the percentage of students at risk more than tripled the year after JK was scrapped.

Trustees on the board are looking at resuming the program in Haliburton and Victoria Counties at the start of the coming school year, but have put their decision on hold until the province tells them how much operational funding the board will receive as of September.

Currently, JK is offered only at schools in Muskoka. The former boards in Haliburton and Victoria Counties got rid of the program as a cost-cutting measure at the beginning of the 1996-97 school year, when the provincial government cut funding for JK steeply.

Trustees in Victoria County — where JK had been running since 1986 and was widely supported by parents — made the decision reluctantly.

In Haliburton County — where many parents and trustees fought against offering the NDP-mandated program — the program was chopped with less regret.

While opponents didn't dispute the educational benefits of children starting school at a younger age, they didn't like the long hours three- and four-year-old children had to spend on the bus because of the county's vast size.

But preliminary local research indicates those long bus rides may be worthwhile for the sake of the children's education.

"We have indications that the number of students at risk (of literacy and language difficulty in Kindergarten) in Victoria County and Haliburton County has increased since Junior Kindergarten was stopped," Larry Archibald, the board's superintendent of schools and elementary operations told trustees at a meeting last week.

Archibald cited a report examining student performance at six

See PARENTS page 4

WINTER BLUES ARE THROWN FOR A LOOP

Jesse Quibell, Erin Deschamps (hidden) and Erika Howe were three of the participants in the weekend's Loop Carnival in the Wilberforce/Harcourt area, organized by the business owners association. For more photos and information on events, see page 24.

New primary school may soon go to tender

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

School board administrators are expected to get the green light next week to tender construction of the new primary school planned for Haliburton.

On Tuesday evening trustees on the board's committee of the whole approved final working drawings for Stuart Baker Elementary School, an 11-classroom building that will replace aging Victoria Street Elementary School.

All nine of the board's trustees sit on the committee so it's anticipated the board will also endorse the $2.3-million plans at its meeting Feb. 24.

Jim Bradley, the board's superintendent of plant and transportation, ran through the long history behind the replacement proposal for trustees, explaining that it was put on hold for a year by a provincial building freeze.

PRICE: 84 cents plus GST = 90 cents

old VSS.

"If there were a fire in this building we would be hard pressed to say (the students) would all be okay," she said.

Muskoka trustee Roger Chamberlain said he's concerned by the amount of debt the newly amalgamated board is taking on to help pay for the primary school and upgrade work at Haliburton's high school.

The provincial government has agreed to put $1.4-million toward the $6-million high

in a reserve fund dedicated to the new school construction.

That leaves the amalgamated board on the hook for a combined debenture of nearly $5.86-million.

Chamberlain said he isn't happy to see the new board starting out with such a high debt load.

"That takes money out of the school system," he said.

Al Ingram, superintendent of finance, said the board is now carrying annual debenture

awaited funding formula will be designated for capital projects, "but we don't know what those figures will be."

Trustees are also recommending that the board approve working drawings for a $2.8-million renovation at Muskoka Lakes Secondary School and authorize administrators to tender the construction.

No debenture will be required for the work and the province is not providing any money towards it.

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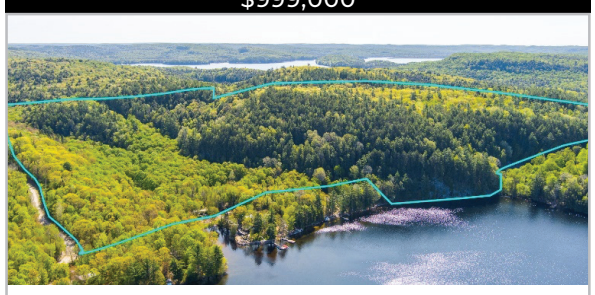

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